the position of South Carolina as an independent nation is unequivocally stated, and the retention of Fort Sumter by the United States authorities is claimed to be "an act of positive hostility." The Governor is under no illusions. He states correctly the purpose of the United States in holding the fort, —it is " the coercion of the State by the armed force of the Government. . . . It is not perceived," he closes by saying, " how . . . the conduct which you propose to adopt can be reconciled with any other purpose of your Government than that of imposing upon this State the condition of a conquered province."

And Governor Pickens was unquestionably right. South Carolina was claiming to be an independent nation, and, unwilling as people might be to use the word, there was nothing for the United States to do, if her claim was to be denied, but to conquer her. The word has a harsh sound, undoubtedly ; the Northern public at the time preferred to speak of restoring the State to the Union; but South Carolina knew what she wanted perfectly well, and was prepared to fight for her independence to the bitter end. There was nothing else to do but to try to conquer her, and conquered she finally was.

Whether this letter of Governor

Fickeiw wan or
was not what Anderson had expected, it
at any rate
exposed the situation of the parties BO
clearly, that
the Major thought he had better defer
executing his
threat of closing the harbor until he had
definite
orders to that effect from his
Government In fact,
such a step as this, taken in retaliation
for even an